



Rep. Brad Benson

District 6

Protecting reliable and affordable electricity!

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From the Desk of Representative Brad Benson

Friends & neighbors,

As a legislator, one of the most important aspects of my job is to be a resource for you on important issues facing our community.

The region has been hit hard by our energy shortage. The energy crisis has been particularly devastating for senior citizens and low-income persons. Unfortunately, there is no quick fix to this crisis.

I was very pleased, however, to join my colleagues in the Legislature to pass House Bill 2247. It passed the Legislature with bipartisan support during the final few days of the regular session, includes a responsible combination of sensible conservation measures and new power generation, such as:

- Providing industrial tax credits for large industrial power users that build their own power plants to free up power for residential customers;
- Requiring utilities to provide a voluntary option to customers to buy from alternative energy sources process;
- Encouraging the building of new power generation facilities by expediting the EFSEC permitting process;
- Providing \$2.5 million in low-income energy assistance.

Although this bill is an excellent start, it is by no means the end of the crisis. We still must all do our part to conserve energy. I hope you will use the accompanying information to help you conserve energy and save on your next utility bill.

If you have any questions about the issues being addressed in Olympia, please give me a call.
Sincerely,

Brad Benson



**protecting
reliable and
affordable
electricity!**

Olympia, WA 98504-0600

P.O. Box 40600

State Representative

Brad Benson

Energy Resources



Energy Assistance Available

For families and individuals who are struggling to pay their electricity bills this winter, there is help available.

I was proud to support legislation to provide low-income energy assistance. House Bill 2222 provides funding to be administered through the Energy Assistance Program which help low-income persons pay a portion of their home heating bills.

If you have questions on how to obtain help, please contact me. Information can also be obtained from local utilities.



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Tips to Ease Energy ‘Sticker Shock’

- **Heating accounts for the biggest chunk of winter energy bills.** Make sure your furnace receives a professional “tune-up” each year. Clean or replace air filters once a month to help your unit run more efficiently.

- **Cut related annual energy expenditures up to 30 percent.** As heating and cooling equipment, appliances, computers and office equipment, windows, lighting fixtures, and consumer electronics break down or no longer meet your needs, replace them with products bearing the Energy Star label (symbol for energy efficiency) www.energystar.gov.

- **Your home is probably leaking energy dollars.** Make sure attic and/or ceilings are well insulated. Seal joints in attic air ducts and make sure they are well insulated too.

- **Plug other energy “leaks.”** Seal leaks between moving parts (between door and its frame) with weather-stripping. Fill leaks between nonmoving parts (between window frame and wall) with caulk and look for windows, glass doors, and skylight bearing the Energy Star label.

- **Tired of awakening to a chilly bedroom** so you leave on the heat all night? A programmable thermostat will automatically coordinate your home temperature with your daily and weekend patterns to increase comfort and monetary savings.

- **Plug surprising “leaks” from standby power.** Idle TVs, VCRs, CD players, computers, cordless phones, microwaves and other appliances continue to consume energy even when switched off. That costs consumers \$3 billion annually. Consider completely unplugging the device if it won’t be used for an extended time.

- **Don’t like coming home to a dark house on those short winter days?** Instead of leaving lights on, put timers on a few of the lights in your home, or install motion detectors on exterior floodlights to improve your home security.

- **Activate “sleep” features on computers and office equipment** that power down when the equipment is on but not in use for a while. Turn off equipment during long periods of nonuse to cut costs and improve longevity.

- **Let the sun help heat your home** by keeping blinds of sun-exposed windows open in the day time and closed at night.

Courtesy of The Alliance to Save Energy, www.ase.org

Rep. Benson addressed the full House, emphasizing the need for new power sources in addition to energy conservation.

Energy Resources on the Web

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Network

U.S. Department of Energy

www.eren.doe.gov/consumerinfo

Comprehensive information on saving energy both in your home and at work.

Home Energy

www.homeenergy.org

Information on energy conservation at work.

Energy Quest

www.energy.ca.gov/education

This Web site for children is a great place for grade school students to visit when doing research for school projects or just to understand energy issues better.

The Building and Home Improvement Products Network

www.build.com

The Build.com site contains energy conservation information for homeowners, contractors, service professionals, and anyone involved in construction and home improvement.